

The Marks of a Healthy Church (Acts 4:23-33)

Proposition: Every one of us can peer into this text and see these marks and endeavor to mark those marks a reality in our own church.

- I. The Mark of Petitions Made (Vs. 24-30)
 - A. A Confidence on God's Word (Vs. 24-26)
 - B. A Confession of God's Will (Vs. 27-28)
 - C. A Call for God's Wonders (Vs. 29-30)
 - D. A Concern for God's Worship (Vs. 30)
- II. The Mark of a Power Manifested (Vs. 31)
 - A. A Divine Shaking (Vs. 31a)
 - B. A Dominating Spirit (Vs. 31b)
 - C. A Decisive Speech (Vs. 31c)
- III. The Mark of a People Mobilized (Vs. 31c-33)
 - A. Publicly Verbalized (Vs. 31c)
 - B. Personally Valued (Vs. 32)
 - C. Perceptibly Validated (Vs. 33)

The Marks of a Healthy Church Acts 4:33-33

Finding where a word originates is not easy, but the idea behind the word "Koinonitis" is a pretty good one. Koinonia is the Greek word for Christian fellowship.

Koinonitis is the disease of becoming too inwardly focused as a church and getting out of balance in the area of fellowship. The church is called to nurture those within the Body of Christ and reach to those outside the body as well. A foreign missionary's daughter coined a phrase that may help us fight off the tendency toward Koinonitis.

Jeff & Nell Gann have served as missionaries in Columbia. One morning Jeff entered his home study to find the world map had fallen off the wall. In the process of falling it became torn. Jeff was assisted in the repair of the map by his 2 yr old daughter Anna. Nell the mother noticed the unusual silence of her daughter and called out from another room. "Anna what are you doing? Quickly and matter of factly Anna replied "We're fixing the world map." off

I. The Mark of Petitions Made - (24-26)

Prayer played a vital role in this healthy church. They were praying when H.S. came in Pentecost. What did this infant church

Prayer. What can we learn from their prayer? ^{concern}

A. A Confidence in God's Word. (Vs 24-26)

God's word is indispensable in prayer.

It guides our prayer into God's will.

Vs 24-26 are Ps 2:1-2. Ever had one-sided

conversation. Prayer is 2 way ^{will accomplish} communication. God's word tells us what he

B. A Confession of God's Will (Vs 27-28)

Their concern was that their opposition asked them not to speak. To squelch the preaching of God's way. They look to God's word and see what is said, then look at recent past experience and see how the enemies did God's will! You

C. A Call for God's Wonders (Vs 29-30)

Here their asking is verbalized. They look to past - recent past - present situation. God do you hear their threats? God give boldness to speak! Stretch forth hand to heal the wonders. Lend veracity to our message.

D. A Concern for God's Worship - (Vs 30)

All in this name. Jesus. That was the dispute earlier in ch 4. That name. The miracle of lame man didn't really matter. It was the name that drew out the venom of Jewish Leaders. This church wanted to make sure the Christ got all glory.

II. The Mark of a Power Manifested (31)

Notice what happened after they prayed. The place was shaken. A Power was Manifested. God responded to this praying.

1) If we will stay busy "fixin' the world" then our churches will enjoy rich and healthy koinonia while staying immunized from koinonitis. If any church was a healthy koinonitis-free church it was the Church at Jerusalem in the first century. I want our church to continue to be a healthy church. Every one of us can peer into this text and see these marks and endeavor to mark those marks a reality in our own church.

2) ...You will prevail! They have no might against God! His will will be accomplished!

church's petition by a display of the Might of God

A. A Divine Shaking (31a) I love what Matthew Henry said here. "The place was shaken so that their faith would be unshaken. This shaking strikes fear in their hearts, reverence, a holy fear of God, rather than man. Would to God that He would respond to our prayers with a Holy shaking. A Brush with his omnipotence & power, out of us. Shake the devil

B. A Dominating Spirit (31b) They were filled w/ his spirit, they were controlled or dominated by the Spirit of God. OH to be controlled, led by the Spirit of God. No one guiding my own steps but a holy guidance from on high.

Eph 5:18 Be filled w/ the Spirit. Not attempting to get more of H.S but to surrender more fully to Him

C. A Decisive Speech (31c) Check the book of Acts. Where you find the filling of the Spirit you find will find a Holy Boldness in proclaiming the truth of the gospel to a lost & dying world. Boldness = liberty or freedom - Freely speaking. OH how our unsanctified flesh impedes the Spirit of God. Many a time stood before others and didn't know

III. The Mark of a People Mobilized 31c-33 This wasn't some Sunday morning side show entertainment session where emotions were teased a few tears were shed and

then when name unchanged. No forms were changed.

A. Publically Verbalized ^{3/c} These folks were mobilized, they set out like screaming eagles into the streets boldly proclaiming the truth, gospepping the gospel. They got exactly what they asked for - to stand fast in the face of persecution, to stand fast in the face of opposition. They went out and verbalized it!

B. Personally Valued - vs 32 These are church members of like passions as we. They doubtlessly had their differences just like you and I do. In any group of people you will have differences. Yet God had their undivided attention. They didn't spend their time looking at each other. 1 all drew them together (in one accord is a theme in Acts)

C. Perceptably Validated vs 33 Not only was the gospel verbalized but it was actualized it had its out workings in public power. "And great grace..." God's favor was seen upon their lives publically. Some say Speak it Speak it others say live it live it. It's not an either or situation it's a both and.

V. Closing. Marks of a healthy church Patience made, Power manifested, a People mobilized. May God help us to endeavor to be a healthy church.

- 1) ...a them in the book of Acts). Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. This is not communism. Communism takes from all. Christianity gives for all. John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.